

Live Online Seminar

Health Pros Share How to Stay Fall-Free

9/10, 10 AM MDT

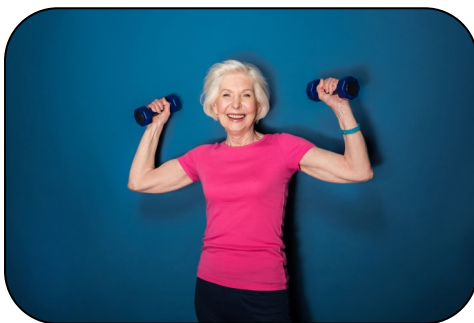
9/22, 2 PM MDT

Get details and register:
aging.idaho.gov/fpaw

5 Easy Steps Cut Fall Risk

1. Remove trip-hazards
2. Maintain balance, flexibility, strength
3. Eat properly, stay hydrated
4. Check medication side-effects, interactions
5. Check vision, hearing

Get the full details:
aging.idaho.gov/fpaw



Falls Prevention
Awareness Week
Sept. 21st—25th

69-Year-Old Boise Woman Takes a Trip

(June 2003) On a bright, clear, beautiful day, Iva's plan was to take a quick side-trip to Capitol Reef National Park, UT. She was properly outfitted with good walking shoes. She had sunscreen and sunglasses to protect from the desert sun. As she was walking, she was trying to spot petroglyphs on the canyon walls. That is where her exploration turned into a real trip.



As trees grow, they spread their roots, often causing upheavals in sidewalks and pathways. Such was the case on this path in the park. She tripped over a root, falling face first onto the path. She instinctively put out her hands to break the fall and came down on her knees. Since she had on shorts, both knees were scratched. Her left knee had a significant gouge. Her palms were likewise scraped. She was more concerned about whether her camera had been damaged and her sunglasses

scratched than she was of her own scratches or the growing pain in her right arm.

“I took a minute, got up, brushed off and went on,” she recalled. “I figured I just sprained it and would ice it later.”

She finished the path through the park before continuing on to her true destination, a Road Scholar tour, “Hiking through Time” that started in Cortez, CO the following day. She was right about one thing, she needed ice, but not just that night. She needed it for the remainder of the trip. Her right arm swelled, was painful and stayed that way.

At the Ute Mountain Tribal Park in Colorado, she had a difficult time scaling the sometimes-steep pathways to Anasazi ruins that were built into cliffs. Her injuries made it painful to climb the ladders used to access most of the ruins. She had to forego seeing the Eagle's Nest which required a long, steep ladder.



“It was challenging but I did it. I did have to miss getting to the highest part because it was too difficult with the ladders. That was disappointing,” Iva lamented.

After the Ute Tribal Park, the group moved on to Mesa Verde. To experience one of the Anasazi ruins there, they had to crawl on hands and knees through a small one-way tunnel. With her injuries, this was a somewhat painful experience. She did it, but her palms and knees, as well as her arm were less than happy with the physical ordeal she put them through.

Having successfully completed the trip and only having to miss one or two of the important sights due to her injuries, she returned home. Still knowing her right arm was not quite right, she went to the emergency room. They identified that she had cracked the bone in her arm just below the elbow. They put on a temporary cast and referred her to an Orthopedic surgeon.

The specialist verified the crack and added that it had almost gone completely through the bone. He advised her of her options. They could do surgery, placing a pin to stabilize the crack or leave it alone and let it heal. He said the surgery carried only about a 50% chance that it would heal any better than doing nothing at all. In addition, the surgery would require weeks of physical therapy. Even so, he could not guarantee complete range of motion of her arm after the procedure.

Iva decided to let it heal naturally. The scratches and scrapes healed after a few days. Her arm took quite a bit longer. Fortunately, she did eventually recover full range of motion and function. She did not have any long-term complications.

We sometimes get interested or distracted with things and forget to watch our step. We often do this in our homes because we feel like we know it so well. Items left out of place or rugs that aren't laying flat become fall hazards. In other places, broken steps or walkways that aren't well maintained can be trip hazards as well.

Although this story has a happy ending, we need to remember that what started off as an enjoyable southwest adventure was hampered by discomfort and pain both during the trip and several weeks after. In this case, not watching her step then stopping to look for petroglyphs before moving on turned a simple nature-human interaction to a trip that almost ruined a trip.

Workshops Teach Techniques to Reduce Complications and Manage Conditions

Diabetes and chronic pain can cause changes that make us more prone to falling. Good management often reduces complications.

Find the best session for you:

<https://aging.idaho.gov/health-promotion-workshops/>

Senior Centers: The Key to Aging Well

Senior centers are the community hub that support older adults to age well. They offer a variety of services including activities, classes, meals, and referrals to other services. Contact your local center to find out what they offer. We invite you to join us!

Medication Matters

Medications manage conditions, reduce symptoms, and save lives. Taking medications we don't need, taking them the wrong way or in the wrong doses, and using certain meds together can have negative effects. We might experience dizziness, weakness or impaired judgement among other things. These adverse effects can increase risk of falls.

Create a complete, accurate medication list to share with your health care provider and pharmacist. They can discuss any recommended changes.



12 Quick Questions Assess Risk

Receive instant results along with resources to assist you in reducing your fall risk.

Try it today!

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